The issue of the missing Indian POWs was also raised in the official level discussions held on March 5-6, 1999. The Pakistani side stated that there were no Indian POWs in its custody, but agreed to re-examine the matters afresh.

There are on going discussions through diplomatic channels with Pakistan for the early release of detainees in each other's custody.

Negotiation between Indian Editor and Pakistan's Former Foreign Secretary

930. SHRI KULDIP NAYYAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the backdoor negotiations between India and Pakistan through Editor, Mr. R.K. Mishra and Pakistan former Foreign Secretary Niaz Naik had official blessings of both countries;

(b) whether any formula has been discussed there; and

(c) if so, what were the contents?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) It is normal for countries to have a variety of processes of communication, both official and non-official. From the Pakistan side, Mr. Niaz Naik was sent to India in June, 1999. He was told categorically that Pakistan's armed intrusion and aggression in Kargil would have to be vacated. The same message was then conveyed to the Pakistan side by Shri R.K. Mishra, who visited Islamabad in the same month. There was no divergence in what was communicated to Pakistan officially or through non-official channels.

Indian detainees in the Myanmar jail

931. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian detainees in the Myanmar jail with their names and ages o'conviction;

(b) whether Government have taken up consultation with the Myanmar Government; and

(c) whether there is any plan of any proposal under

consideration regarding free movement between Myanmar and India in More (India) and Tamu (Myanmar)?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) According to available information, there are 24 Indian nationals lodged in various jails in Myanmar. Relevant details (such as the name, age, term of sentence etc) of these persons are given in Annexure. *[see Appendix 188, Annexure No. 25].*

(b) Under the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations 1963, the Embassy of India, Yangon has sought and been granted consular access to these prisoners by the Government of Myanmar.

(c) No, Sir.

Peace gesture offered by Pervez Musharraf

932. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of peace gesture offered by General Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan who now wields absolute power in Pakistan; and

(b) what is Government's reaction in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The military coup in Pakistan has not altered Pakistan's aggressive approach and hostile policies towards India. Pakistani spokesmen continue with their violent anti-India propaganda. Pakistan's sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in the State of Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in India has also continued unabated. Pakistani forces have also continued firing across the Line of Control and the International Border in Jammu & Kashmir. Pakistan has made no moves to withdraw troops from the Line of Control where they had been inducted in large numbers during its armed intrusion and aggression in the Kargil sector.

India is committed to resolving all outstanding issues with Pakistan in accordance with the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration. We expect Pakistan to demonstrate its adherence to these agreements